

## Polstead Club Site Kersey and Hadleigh walk

Camping and Caravanning



### Route Summary

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A 14.5km/9 mile walk through gentle undulating countryside to the beautiful medieval village of Kersey. Take in the splendour of the south Suffolk countryside on quiet country lanes, byways and footpaths. A short detour to the small town of Hadleigh is possible. Walk created by Skye Strolls Ltd

### Route Overview

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Category: Walking  
Length: 14.490 km / 9.06 mi  
Last Modified: 9th July 2018  
Difficulty: Medium  
Rating: Unrated  
Surface: Moderate  
Date Published: 9th July 2018

### Description

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The Camping and Caravanning Club Site at Polstead is on the northern edge of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a conservation area not only resplendent in flora and fauna but also in history. Walk along enjoying the sound of Skylarks singing as they hover overhead, while keeping an eye out for signs of Water Vole and Otters along the streams and rivers.

To the north of Polstead is the south Suffolk plateau. Although not very high, it is in this area that there are several small rivers and streams that break up the countryside. Gradually these streams flow towards the River Stour and the sea through beautiful Constable Country.

Along the first part of this walk you will pass Polstead Heath, which has a 19th century orchard, home of the Polstead Black Cherry.

The main walk goes over land that has been farmed for generations, but there is a small diversion possible that would take you into nearby Hadleigh. This small, historic and graceful market town can boast a Bronze Age settlement as its foundation. There's a multitude of things to see, including the 15th Century Guildhall that was originally built as a market house and wool hall, the 15th century Deanery Tower and St Mary's Church with its 13th century tower. The

poet Sir John Betjeman described the town as “one of the most perfect small towns of England”.

After crossing the main Ipswich to Sudbury road, St Mary’s Church at Kersey begins to dominate the skyline, and the impressive flint building looks even better when viewed from the middle of the town. The Street in Kersey has been photographed countless times and used in adverts for a multitude of products. It ranks amongst the finest in the country, especially with the picturesque 'splash' right in the centre.

Although small by today’s standards, the quaint village was once a thriving hub of the wool and cloth trade, and Kersey cloth, a course woollen cloth, is named after the village. An indication of how busy a place Kersey used to be is the fact that in 1252 the Lord of the Manor was granted permission to hold a weekly market. Alongside this there was an Augustinian Priory on the opposite hill to the church, which due to financial difficulties closed in 1444. Unfortunately, the ruins are within private property with no public access.

## Waypoints

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### 1 Camping and Caravanning Club Site, Polstead

(52.02495; 0.89557)



Leave the Camping and Caravanning Club Site via the main entrance, turning right then right again at the junction. Pass through the old orchards and alongside a hedgerow that according to signage is over 500 years old and contains over 19 different woody plants. Cross undulating fields and the occasional stream – beware some parts can be muddy.

### 2 Path and road junction at Holbecks

(52.03672; 0.94114)



On reaching the country lane at Holbecks, turn left along the road for a short distance, then just after the left-hand bend turn right along a well-marked and wide path. Enjoy the expansive views over the town of Hadleigh and in all other directions as you make your way along this path. At Coram Street turn right towards Hadleigh, a short distance later a footpath will be seen signed to the right opposite Friars Hall Farm.

Should you wish to detour into Hadleigh then take the footpath immediately on your right after getting to the road at Holbecks.

### 3 Friars Hall Farm

(52.04749; 0.93853)



From Friars Hall Farm, you can get a good view of St Mary's Church at Kersey on the opposite side of the A1071. Follow the well signed path through the field and over the road – please take great care as this can be a very busy and fast stretch of road. Continue along the pathways until arriving at the road near St Mary's Church, then descend into the centre of a truly beautiful, quaint village.

If you opted to take the detour into Hadleigh, then Friars Hall Farm on Coram Street would be an excellent point to re-join the main walk.

#### 4 The Splash at Kersey

(52.05958; 0.91645)



After enjoying the sights of Kersey and possibly refreshments at The Bell Inn, the journey continues along a small track partway between The Splash and the pub. After crossing the river and turning left, cross the stile into a field and follow a line of electricity cables up the hill. On reaching the hedge at the far side of the hill go over another stile and turn right along the line of the hedge. This will eventually bring you to the small hamlet of Kersey Tye.

#### 5 Road junction at Kersey Tye

(52.05062; 0.89365)



At the road junction take the By Road to the next junction then turn right to Wicker Street Green. Towards the far side of this hamlet a track will be found on your left with the name Blessem Hall and a footpath sign. Go along this track, which gradually opens out to a glorious country lane surrounded by hedging and woods, with birds singing on both sides. At Bower House Tye follow the roadway to The Brewers Arms, where you need to take great care as you pass along a short length of the A1071 prior to entering the road that leads to the Camping and Caravanning Club Site at Polstead.

